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ANGLO-AMERICAN FRIENDSHIP.

BY BRIGADIER-GENERAL WILLIAM H. CARTER, U.S.A.

AMONG many adventures which have fallen to the lot of the army since the declaration of war with Spain, none seems more strange than that American regiments were found lined up as allies with British regiments in far-away China. In an expedition composed of representatives of many nations, it was but natural that the English-speaking troops should fraternize; yet, judged by the occurrences of the century which followed the Declaration of Independence, it would not have been surprising if the reverse had been the case. Nevertheless, there was genuine satisfaction in this country in the knowledge that American and Briton stood, self-respectingly, shoulder to shoulder in that heterogeneous army.

“Blood is thicker than water” is a sentiment which has been so often repeated of late, that it may not be unprofitable to consider why it should have been necessary ever to invoke the aid of such a catch-phrase to awaken and cement the ties of friendship between Americans and Englishmen. Descended, as were most of the early colonists, from long lines of British ancestry, it is hardly possible that all ties of kinship would have been forgotten by the colonists by reason of any of the real or imaginary grievances which brought on the conflict for independence.

It is not intended to discuss the idiotic policy which forced the American colonies to annul their political allegiance to the Mother Country; but it may be worth while to point out some of the causes which led to an estrangement so bitter that, for nearly a century, the school histories intended for American children were considered as entirely justified in encouraging everlasting distrust and bitterness concerning Great Britain.

There was much to cause irritation and a sense of injustice in many of the laws of the Mother Country, as applied by officers

and agents far from the source of power. American manhood, having resented attempted oppression by force of arms, and having won out in fair fight, would have extended the hand of honest friendship to England, if there had not been deep scars seared in the hearts of the colonists and unhealed wounds re-opened at every opportunity through a long course of years.

Intelligent Americans knew full well the hell which follows in the wake of war. Many of the colonists had served with British troops, and a conflict with these troops meant to the colonists only that honorable fight which might have been expected to be waged between men of the same blood. Had the war been fought out on fair lines, there would have been no more estrangement between Englishmen and Americans than exists to-day between men of the North and men of the South, who, for four long years, engaged in that battle royal which decided the fate of the Union.

Americans bore no special ill will to the Hessians; but the contempt which all freemen have for the hireling naturally manifested itself on occasions. For the ruler who sold their services, and for the British kindred who authorized and paid the hire of the mercenaries, there was engendered a scorn and hatred which children for half a century absorbed with their mother's milk.

Not satisfied with this act of folly, the evil counsellors of George III. continued to embitter the colonists through the infamous policy of using Indians to harass and murder those of their own English blood, scattered in the sparse settlements of the border land. Thus there was implanted in the breasts of Americans a feeling of deep resentment against the men from the Mother Country who did the bidding of their ill-advised rulers. Here and there, instances of British manhood cropped out to show that all sense of fairness had not departed from the gallant regiments which had been sent to crush the Revolution; but, what with prison ships, Hessians and Indians, the minds of the colonists were gradually closed to the belief that any generosity or consideration was obtainable, except at the point of the bayonet.

Common school histories of the events of an hundred years ago contain accounts of all the well-known actions of the period. An incident, not so commonly known, may be fairly cited to show the state of mind of the average British officer, and the contempt in which he held his American cousins. There was a gallant young gentleman from Prince George County, Maryland, Otho

Holland Williams, by name, who, by virtue of his education and soldierly ability, so commended himself to his superiors that he was rapidly advanced to the grade of Major of Riflemen while yet a mere boy. He was wounded in the groin during the attack on Fort Washington, and was captured by Hessians. While in prison in New York, he was exchanged for a young officer of the British service, Major Ackland. The two gallant young officers became warm friends. On one occasion, after dining with the Acklands, Major Williams was invited by the host to accompany him to an assembly, the fashionable ball of the period. Major Williams was treated with such contemptuous scorn, that Major Ackland boldly said: "Come, Williams, this society is too ill-bred for you and me; let us go home."

After returning to England, Major Ackland attended a mess dinner at which the courage of Americans was questioned. Ackland defended Americans, and, in the heat of argument, gave the lie direct to Lieutenant Lloyd, who challenged him. In the duel which followed, Major Ackland was shot in the head and killed. Major Williams survived the war, and for many years filled high public office in Baltimore. This incident is related in an old work published in Philadelphia and London, the general character of which justifies the belief as to its accuracy.

Tarleton was a brave, young cavalry officer, of high spirit and great enterprise. His methods of waging war caused him to be feared and cordially hated by the colonists; yet he would have been singled out for promotion in any modern army because of his excellent service. Time has mellowed the asperities of feeling engendered by conflict, and Tarleton's delightful military memoirs have won for him many admirers amongst American officers of to-day. He waged real war with his troopers, and a right gallant enemy he proved.

Coming along down the years, British officials did little to ameliorate the bitter feeling which had been left along the trails of suffering during the Revolution; and, when the States could no longer tolerate the humiliation to which they were subjected, the War of 1812 was accepted as a last resort. It is not intended to go into the historical details of this epoch; for, even though the Secretary of War, John Armstrong, joined the army in person on the northern frontier, there were few features of the operations on land to which Americans can point with much soldierly pride.

Some incidents of this struggle show that British sentiment had not changed in the lapse of the thirty-odd years which followed the Revolution. Before news of the declaration of war could reach Fort Michilimackinac, the small American garrison, consisting of fifty-seven officers and men, was surrounded by a British force of one thousand and twenty-one, more than seven hundred of whom were Indians. The garrison was coolly informed that, if a single gun was fired in honorable defence, all would be massacred by the savages, and in his report the commander of the British forces said: "It was a fortunate circumstance the fort capitulated without firing a single gun, for, had they done so, I firmly believe not a soul would have been saved."

When the tide of war on the northern frontier had changed in our favor, no less a personage than General William H. Harrison addressed a letter, under date of November 3rd, 1813, to Major-General Vincent of the British Army, commenting upon General Proctor's conduct in sending a young subaltern, under flag of truce, to ask humane treatment for prisoners and the restoration of private property and papers, after having subjected his American prisoners to "all the indignities and deprivations which human nature is capable of supporting." After reciting numerous instances of barbarity, perpetrated by parties coming directly from the British camps and returning to them with plunder and such prisoners as were not murdered, General Harrison says:

"To retaliate, then, upon the subjects of the King would have been justifiable by the laws of war and the usages of the most civilized nations. To do so has been amply in my power, nor have instruments of vengeance been wanting. . . . You are a soldier, sir, and, as I sincerely believe, possess all the honorable sentiments which ought always to be found in men who follow the profession of arms. Use, then, I pray you, your authority and influence to stop that dreadful effusion of innocent blood which proceeds from the employment of those savage monsters, whose aid (as must now be discovered) is so little to be depended upon when it is most wanted, and which can have so trifling an effect upon the issue of the war. The effect of their barbarities will not be confined to the present generation. Ages yet to come will feel the deep-rooted hatred and enmity which they must produce between the two nations."

This excerpt is but a fragment of the long communication from this distinguished soldier and citizen.

In conveying, by flag of truce, his courteous acknowledgment, General Vincent said:

"Believe me, sir, I deprecate, as strongly as yourself, the perpetration of acts of cruelty committed under any pretext; and shall lament equally with yourself that any state of things should produce them. No efforts of mine will be ever wanting to diminish the evils of a state of warfare, as far as may be consistent with the duties which are due to my King and country."

But, nevertheless, the savages were continued in service under the British flag.

A British proclamation, under date of August 22nd, 1814, contains this language:

"Natives of Louisiana! On you the first call is made to assist in liberating, from a faithless, imbecile government, your paternal soil; Spaniards, Frenchmen, Italians and British, whether settled, or residing for a time in Louisiana, on you also, I call to aid me in this just cause; the American usurpation in this country must be abolished and the lawful owners put in possession. I am at the head of a large body of Indians, well armed, disciplined and commanded by British officers: . . . rest assured that these brave red men only burn with ardent desire for satisfaction for the wrongs they have suffered from the Americans."

There was not much of martial success to comfort the Americans during most of the period covered by the war of 1812-15, but the result of Pakenham's defeat at New Orleans, after the war had been officially closed, took away some of the sore feeling left by a succession of military blunders. Matters drifted along, but with a feeling amongst Americans always that they could expect neither friendship nor justice from British officials. Several years after the close of the war of 1812-15, the depredations of the Seminole Indians of Florida became so annoying that General Jackson invaded that country, which belonged to Spain, and having captured two British subjects, Arbuthnot and Ambrister, he caused them to be tried by court-martial for inciting Indians to murder American settlers. Arbuthnot was hung and Ambrister shot. The adjustment of the Nova Scotia boundary was prolific of crimination and recrimination as far back as 1838, when Great Britain organized a considerable force of Canadian militia and quietly increased the garrison of British regulars in Canada to about 20,000 men before communicating to the American govern-

ment the result of a new boundary survey by British commissioners. The northwestern boundary dispute ended in a way which left a sting of bitterness, for "54-40 or fight" had become a slogan of no mean proportions.

The course of trade flowed steadily on during the first half of the century, and the development by Americans of a merchant-marine of first-class proportions naturally made many British ship-owners and public men encourage secession in 1861. Notwithstanding the constant appeals of John Bright and many true-hearted Englishmen, the dullest of Americans soon learned that the weight of British influence was thrown into the balance against the Union. So bitter was the prevailing opinion on this subject, that all that prevented war was the knowledge of President Lincoln and his advisers that to crush secession was a big enough undertaking for one generation.

The adjustment of the Alabama claims smoothed the way somewhat, but did not wholly remove suspicion. The long series of fishery troubles, followed by the slaughter of seals off the Alaska coast, the constant strengthening of the naval base at Esquimaux, and the encroachments of the Canadian mounted police along the American boundary as soon as the gold fields in Alaska became valuable, led many intelligent Americans to consider whether arbitration was not reaching the limit of indulgence. A feeling of resentment ran very high amongst Americans in Alaska, and many improbable and absurd stories found ready believers bent on resisting the Canadian authorities. The war with Spain came to occupy public attention and turned away the threatening clouds.

The course of England generally in our war with Spain, the conduct of the British naval contingent at Manila, and the cordial treatment of Americans by Englishmen in all parts of the world have at last turned the tide; and now an international friendship backed by the intelligence and best blood of both nations bids fair to start down the new century in earnest approval of the sentiment that "Blood is thicker than water." God speed the movement which tends to dispel forever the misunderstandings and bitterness of the olden days—misunderstandings and bitterness which should never have continued between nations of the same blood, the same language and the same aspirations for the highest form of liberty.

WILLIAM H. CARTER.